

Minutes of the Information Management Panel
Friday, March 4, 2005

Bruce called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

Present: Supervisors Genia Bruce (chair), Duane Paulson and Bill Mitchell. **Absent:** Supervisor Jim Behrend, Citizen Keith Pickens.

Also Present: Information Systems Manager Michael Biagioli, Systems Technology Administrator Al Mundt, Chief of Staff Lee Esler, Office Services Coordinator Windy Jicha, Consultant Gary Ginardi of Whitman Hart, HHS Director Peter Schuler.

Approve Minutes of January 14, 2005

MOTION: Paulson moved, Mitchell second, to approve the meeting minutes of January 14, 2005. Motion carried: 3-0.

Future Agenda Items

- Strategic Assessment of IT
- RFP Selection for Mobile Data Computing
- Spillman Reports and System Issues
- Joint meeting with the Judiciary Committee and Information Management Panel at the Communications Center

Next Meeting Date

- May 6th at 8:30 a.m.

Communication Center Update and Future Plans

Biagioli said the City of Brookfield Fire and Police Dispatch functions were successfully transferred to the County Dispatch Center on February 21, 2005 with no issues. The final community to come on board to the county dispatch function is the Village of Butler Fire and Police on March 31. The timeline for this transfer is influenced by the fact that the Village of Butler, which is currently dispatched by Menomonee Falls, must convert their processes and law records from Menomonee Falls to the Village of Butler.

Biagioli said the next issue the Center will deal with is the Spillman System upgrade from version 3.0 to 4.1. The upgrade is anticipated to take 90 to 120 days to complete. Before activation is possible, all upgrades and modifications must be tested and users must be trained.

Mundt said this is a good time to do the upgrade. The upgraded Spillman System will be run in tandem with the current system using logical partitioning technology. This technology will allow Waukesha County to run the new system simultaneously with the current system. The actual transition from the old system to the upgrade will take place during a slow service time and create a minimal amount of down time. The old system will remain intact until all the testing is completed and can be referred to as needed.

Biagioli said there will be a short break, approximately several minutes, in the live system during the transition but it should be a shorter length of time than regular transitions.

Mitchell asked how much training staff will need? Biagioli said some screens will look different and some of the changes are already built into the Waukesha County system. Training staff will receive a primer from Spillman and train on a test system. Biagioli said our initial assessment shows that Waukesha County will need to spend \$22K instead of \$75K on hardware/software for this conversion.

Biagioli said along with several partner agencies, the county has purchased an enterprise license for the digital imaging attachment software for the law records part of the system. This software will allow agencies to add a variety of digital images to their law and fire records and use the functionality for investigation and reporting. When this feature was demonstrated it was not explained that there was an additional charge for it. Several police chiefs asked the county to buy the licenses for the system but the cost totaled \$85K. The police chiefs thought this was a “bait and switch” but actually it is a new feature. There was enough interest in the system by partnering agencies that the county entered into negotiations to buy a master license and will allow the police agencies to buy into the license for \$2K. The county will forward the cost for departments that don’t have money in their 2005 budgets for this. Initially, the county will eat 30% of the \$49K cost but will get the money back as other agencies become users of the software. These licenses will only be offered to those communities who are in the Dispatch Center.

Esler said internally you will bill hours to the Sheriff’s and Public Safety Departments for dispatch services. Dispatch was set up to provide countywide services. The problem with this scenario is how do we define what services at the Dispatch Center are minimum services and what are extras. We are crossing over from “free” to “extras” and passing incremental cost to users for additional features. Biagioli said this feature is above what is offered with the base package. Several agencies have purchased separate Spillman modules and support. Agencies have the option to buy any of the additional Spillman modules they choose.

Biagioli said when all the individual dispatch systems were combined some of the records were already in the county database creating duplicate records. A contract clerk typist was brought in to clean up the database. Biagioli expects this process to be completed in April. There are more than 3.4 million base records in the Spillman database.

Mitchell asked if the information can be merged? Biagioli said duplicate information can be merged.

Avatar PM Module Implementation Update

Biagioli said the county has received the family statement module from CSM. The county has made an agreement with CSM on interim payment and payment has been made. County staff will test the family and individual pieces of the module, which covers the private pay component. CSM has also given Waukesha County an price estimate for the additional AHL7 synchronized to People Link.

Mitchell asked Schuler and Biagioli if they feel comfortable with the amount of communication between HHS and IS Departments? Schuler said Christman is the liaison between the departments. There have been numerous meetings and conference calls between the departments and communications with CSM.

Biagioli said we are two versions behind on this module. We will need to upgrade the system once we finish implementation so we are planning the conversion.

Schuler said to help improve collections, the county has notified those customers who have an obligation to pay for services requesting their personal payment information. The notification explained that customers were responsible for paying for services even though the county is having system problems. Customers are billed the full cost of care and are responsible to pay what they owe. He hopes this letter will dramatically reduce billing complications.

Discussion of Information Systems Support for HHS

Biagioli said the computer systems in HHS are very complicated. The HHS staff is responsible for testing multiple computer areas according to department priorities. Sometimes HHS staff is not available to immediately perform testing when IS finishes projects. Schuler said to test these systems, his staff needs to have institutional knowledge. He can’t hire someone to do the testing because they lack both institutional knowledge and the broad knowledge of all the HHS computer systems and how they interact.

Biagioli said his staff with HHS computer knowledge is committed to other projects. It wouldn't work to bring in additional contract staff because these people would need to be trained and supervised. Biagioli said the last item on the HHS "to do" list is an analysis of HHS priority needs in automation processes. He wants to assign an appropriate timeline and cost of completion for each project. In the last three years, the county has gotten mandates from the state that weren't anticipated. Mandates create problems in the normal day-to-day operations of both departments. When we do the analysis, we are going to try to build this into the equation. Schuler said mandates throw off planning and timetables. It is important when scheduling to match IS department outputs with HHS staff testing availability.

Bruce said it is important to keep the lines of communication open between departments. Mitchell said he wants to make sure both IS and HHS are communicating to solve problems.

Biagioli said over the last eight months, IS and HHS has had two meetings per week in addition to a weekly conference call with CSM. It has been a slow process. Seventy-five to 90 days were lost because CSM was unable to emulate the Waukesha County system.

Mitchell said we need to revisit the RFP process in particular how we choose vendors especially those who have never worked in Wisconsin. These companies may have difficulties working in this state. This has been a challenge in other areas of the county.

Presentation of the Intranet IT Initiative "Dashboard"

Biagioli said this year his department is working on better communications with department heads and managers in the county. The plan, which is an outgrowth of the Technology Steering Committee, will provide a list of major initiatives being worked on by IT and will be available on the Intranet. Biagioli showed the Panel a draft chart/calendar of major initiatives as it will look on the Intranet. Staff will be able to monitor IT projects and know when projects will be worked on. The chart will be updated monthly to indicate conflicts, issues, schedule changes, completions, etc.

Biagioli said Naegle has been working on a "Dashboard" feature that IT will also post and update on the intranet. This feature will be linked with the calendar mentioned above and updated monthly to show the progress of the projects. Putting this on the intranet will provide users with updated information and eliminate hard copies. Biagioli will also use it as a tool to produce the IT year-end report.

Information Systems 2005 Workload and Impacts

Biagioli said a county policy has been in place for three years to use off-the-shelf systems thereby minimizing the need for custom development. Due to this change in philosophy, staffing and resources have been moved from development to support in an effort to better meet day-to-day needs of the department. The department's need for support staff will continue to increase while the number of development staff decreases. Also, due to the workflow at the county, the number of projects the department can take on decreases annually because he has fewer staff to complete the work. A transition to thin client technology will reduce the number of PC technicians needed and cause Biagioli to rethink how his department delivers services.

Mitchell asked if these changes will enable him to get by with less staff? Biagioli said he's not sure. Thin client technology should reduce the number of PC technicians but increase the need for staff to support the additional servers. His focus needs to change from custom development to systems integrator and service support while being aware of the return of investment. His staff is not interchangeable. Some of the positions are interchangeable but not necessarily the staff. He's trying to avoid adding new FTE positions. The next five years are going to have a great impact on the technologies IT provides and how the department supports them.

Motion to Adjourn

MOTION: Paulson moved, Mitchell second, to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 a.m. Motion carried: 3 - 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Duane E. Paulson, Secretary
Information Management Panel